



Columbus-Belmont State Park

Teacher's Packet

Contact Information

Columbus-Belmont State Park

PO Box 9

350 Park Road

Columbus KY 42032

270-677-2327

columbusbelmont@ky.gov

Located on highway 58-80-123 in Hickman County, Kentucky

Visit our website at www.parks.ky.gov

Date of visit: _____

Time of program: _____

Type of program: _____

Fees: Students \$ _____

Teachers \$ _____

Other Adults \$ _____

Payable to Columbus-Belmont State Park



WELCOME TO COLUMBUS-BELMONT KENTUCKY STATE PARK

Gift Shop & Museum Hours

Open weekends Oct. through Apr.: 9 AM-5 PM Saturday, and 10 AM-6 PM Sunday.

Open daily May-September: 9 AM-5 PM.

Museum admission: \$2 admission for adults; \$1.50 for children.

Group rate for ten or more persons: \$1.50 for adults; \$1 for children.

Snack Bar & Mini Golf

Daily May 1-Labor Day and weekends in Sept.

In 1860 Columbus, KY, was a busy Mississippi River port of 1000 people and the northern terminus of the Mobile & Ohio Railroad. Columbus sat on a plain in front of a semicircular chain of 180-foot tall bluffs. In September 1861 Confederate General Leonidas Polk ordered the occupation of Columbus because cannons placed on the bluffs could control the river. On November 7, 1861, a then unknown Union General Ulysses S. Grant fought his first Civil War battle when he raided a small CSA camp at Belmont, Missouri, across the river from Columbus. By early 1862 Polk had dug on the bluff a large earthwork named Fort DeRussy and two smaller forts surrounded by miles of infantry trenches. Cannons were mounted on three shelves cut into the side of the bluff. Two small earthwork forts and more infantry trenches protected the town itself. Polk had more than 17,000 soldiers, about 90 large cannon, 50 smaller field cannon, and dozens of electrically fired land mines buried around Columbus. River mines had been placed in front of a mile long chain of twenty-pound links, supported by barges that stretched across the river from Belmont to a six-ton sea anchor buried inside Fort DeRussy. The Confederates proudly called Columbus the "Gibraltar of the West."

But in February 1862 Grant went around Columbus by capturing the much weaker Forts Henry and Donelson on the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers. Outflanked and now useless, Columbus was abandoned by Polk in March 1862. Columbus was immediately occupied by the Union Army & Navy and became a very important military river and railroad supply depot for the rest of the war. The occupying Union soldiers had to cope with hostile local civilians, large numbers of refugee former slaves, massive smuggling, endemic guerilla warfare, and raids by Confederate General Bedford Forrest. Fort DeRussy would be renamed Fort Halleck and be eventually garrisoned by 1000 former slaves of the 4th U. S. Colored Heavy Artillery Regiment. By 1865 at least 75% of the Union soldiers in western Kentucky were former slaves.

The Civil War left Columbus devastated. Many buildings had been ruined, the local people impoverished, and the Mobile & Ohio Railroad wrecked. Recovery came after the Mobile & Ohio Railroad was repaired and the Saint Louis & Iron Mountain Railroad came to Belmont, Missouri. A steamboat ferry at Columbus carried the railroad cars across the river. Swelling to about 2000 people, Columbus now became a busy and prosperous transfer point for passengers and freight.

The river and the railroads had given birth to Columbus. Both would now combine to destroy it. In 1881 the M & O bypassed Columbus. And in 1911 the Saint Louis & Iron Mountain discontinued service to Belmont. Columbus had lost any economic reason for existing. In 1918 the Mississippi River began to seriously eat away at Columbus. In 1927 the second of two record floods finally washed away 450 feet of the riverbank. The American Red Cross then moved 500 people and 166 buildings to a new Columbus City on top of the bluffs. Since then the river has continued to slowly move eastwards and has covered about half of the site of the old city.

Columbus-Belmont Kentucky State Park was built on top of the bluff by the Civilian Conservation Corps during the 1930s. In addition to a wonderful view of the Mississippi River the park has a newly renovated museum featuring 1864 photographs of Union soldiers stationed at Columbus, the largest Civil War cannon in Kentucky, Polk's six ton sea anchor with a chain of twenty pound links, and the remains of infantry trenches and Fort DeRussy/Halleck.

As you face the end of the park parking lot you will see before you paths leading to shelter houses, picnic tables, the anchor & chain, the mounted 32 powder cannon, and a magnificent view of the river 180 feet below. To your right will be paths taking you to the snack bar, the gift shop, the public rest rooms, and the remains of Fort DeRussy/Halleck. To your left is a path leading up a small hill to a restored earthwork fort and to the park museum just beyond it.

A TOUR OF THE MUSEUM AT COLUMBUS-BELMONT

Kentucky Academic Expectations for Social Studies:

2.19 Students recognize and understand the relationship between people and geography and apply their knowledge in real-life situations.

2.20 Students understand, analyze, and interpret historical events, conditions, trends, and issues to develop historical perspective.

Kentucky Core Content for Assessment References (Fourth Grade) Social Studies:

SS-04-4.1.2 Students will use geographic tools to locate major landforms, bodies of water, places and objects in Kentucky by their absolute and relative locations.

SS-04-4.1.3 Students will describe how different factors (e.g., rivers, mountains) influence where human activities were/are located in Kentucky.

SS-04-5.1.1 Students will use a variety of primary and secondary sources (e.g., artifacts, diaries, timelines) to describe significant events in the history of Kentucky and interpret different perspectives.

Background

On the bluffs above the Mississippi River, a farmhouse built in the 1850s has silently witnessed the ebb and flow of history around it.

Within a decade, Civil War strategy altered the surrounding landscape. Below the bluffs, the town of Columbus would prosper, then slowly decline until floods drowned the original town. Red Cross workers would relocate what remained, build a new Columbus on the bluffs, and in the process uncover remarkable wartime fortifications.

The Civilian Conservation Corps established a camp here during the 1930s and turned the site into an historical Park. The farmhouse which had already changed shape several times was rebuilt to display Native American and Civil War relics found on or near the park. Many features of the original house were lost or altered. Based on local tradition, it became identified as the Civil War infirmary. The description held until the present day.

All this time, the Mississippi continued to flow, to change course, and to influence life and events up and down river.

The Department of Parks has completed a major renovation of the building. The farmhouse has been stabilized. Existing elements of the original structure remain, and a careful balance has been struck between these and the requirements of a museum open to the public.

New exhibits reinterpret some of the many stories of what happened here, but the Museum's primary focus is on the period from 1850 to 1870. Visitors become immersed in the Civil War, when hundreds of thousands of soldiers passing this site saw an earthwork "fortress" comparable to Spain's Rock of Gibraltar.

Confederate troops stationed here at Ft. DeRussey built defenses to control the river and keep Northern armies from entering the South. Columbus was impregnable from land or sea. Yet, the strategy failed as Federal forces under General Ulysses S. Grant isolated the fortifications and the Confederates abandoned them in early 1862. The North occupied Columbus, renamed the principal fortification Ft. Halleck, and held the area through the end of the war. It became a major supply and support facility for Union armies moving south and east. The 4th US Colored Heavy Artillery, formed at Columbus, garrisoned the site. From 1865 until the post was shut down in 1869, a Freedmen's Bureau office coordinated African-American relief and resettlement.

Four galleries develop this narrative.

Gallery 1 explores the often painful process of choosing sides in the conflict.

Gallery 2 surveys the area's history, examining slavery's role leading to war and how Columbus broke Kentucky's neutrality. A timeline spanning from prehistoric Native Americans to the era of the Civil War to the time of the Civilian Conservation Corps invites students to chart the course of history at Columbus. A navigation diorama and maps interpret the geographic history of the site.

Gallery 3 concentrates on the two periods of wartime occupation and the common soldiers who served here. Exhibit elements recreate Confederate winter quarters, camp life, the Union Quartermaster's Depot, and the Battle of Belmont. Diaries, letters, and personal affects recapture the sentiments and routines of troops from both sides.

Gallery 4 provides an overview of war in the East and West and examines the move to total war. Other subjects include technology's impact on armament, strategy and tactics, Civil War medicine including the museum building's possible use as a company hospital, and the war's lasting legacy. Music, interactive and audio-visual programs, and objects from the Park's collections interpret the realities of war and its aftermath.

In all galleries, a series of questions posed by gallery guide and Civil War drummer boy Johnny Clem help younger visitors learn what happened here. Visitors to Columbus-Belmont State Park now have a resource for understanding the physical remains preserved there and the land on which they rest.

About the Anchor and Chain at Columbus-Belmont State Park

A deep sea anchor and chain originally from the Washington Navy Yard and the Mobile Harbor at the outbreak of the war, was brought up the Mississippi River and installed at Columbus, KY to prevent Union gun boats from opening up the Mississippi and cutting the Confederacy in half. It was located on the bluff with flukes that were 9 foot apart and placed in a vertical position. There were 12 foot oak logs lodged in front of the flukes. The anchor weighed 2 tons and the chain had 20 lbs. links that were 11" long and 6" wide. It was buried at the bluff edge, lowered down the bank and then placed onto log pontoons and floated across the river. On the Missouri side of the river the chain was attached to two large sycamore trees. A capstan (an upright device) between the shore and the trees allowed the chain to be touted at any time. The pontoon barges were removed and the chain allowed to sink at points necessary to receive Confederate supplies. The great weight of the chain together with the river current caused the chain to break near the Kentucky shore. This portion of the chain and anchor are displayed at Columbus-Belmont State Park.

Lesson Plan Suggestion:

- ▶ Create discussion sheets for students to use or discuss orally while at the museum for the following suggested questions:
 - What map in the museum shows the major body of water at Columbus, Kentucky and what is the name of the body of water?
 - What map in the museum shows the town of Belmont Missouri and where is it located relative to Columbus, Kentucky?
 - Based on reading the text and maps in the exhibits, why did the Confederates choose Columbus for their Fort? What influenced their decision?
 - Identify primary and secondary sources in the museum exhibits which help describe the events of the Civil War in Columbus and which sources tell the story of different perspectives of life during the war.
 - Use the following question and answer sheets during your visit.

NAME _____

QUESTIONS AT COLUMBUS-BELMONT MUSEUM

1. IN 1861, WHO WERE THE TWO PRESIDENTS OF THE UNITED STATES? (room 1)
2. IN WHAT YEAR DID THE CIVIL WAR BEGIN? (room 1)
3. WHERE DID THE CIVIL WAR BEGIN? (room 4)
4. WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE RIVER AT COLUMBUS, KY? (room 1 & 5)
5. WHAT WAS THE NAME OF THE CONFEDERATE FORT AT COLUMBUS? (room 3)
6. WHICH STATE WAS PRESIDENT LINCOLN AND PRESIDENT DAVIS BORN? (room 1)
7. WHO WAS THE CONFEDERATE MAJOR GENERAL AT COLUMBUS? (room 3)
8. WHO WAS THE UNION BRIGADIER GENERAL AT BELMONT, MO? (room 3)
9. WHO WAS THE 10-YEAR-OLD UNION DRUMMER BOY? (room 3)
10. WHAT WAS THE NAME OF THE CONFEDERATE CANNON THAT EXPLODED AT COLUMBUS? (room 3)
11. WHO WAS THE LADY POLK NAMED AFTER? (room 3)
12. WHO WAS THE GENERAL OF THE CONFEDERATE ARMY? (room 4)
13. WHAT COLOR WAS THE CONFEDERATE UNIFORMS? (room 4)
14. WHAT COLOR WAS THE UNION UNIFORMS? (room 4)
15. WHICH SIDE OF THE WAR DID MARY TODD LINCOLN'S BROTHER FIGHT? (room 1)
16. HOW MANY DAYS DID THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG LAST? (room 4)
17. WHEN DID GRANT CAPTURE FORT HENRY AND FORT DONELSON? (room 4)
18. WHEN DID LEE SURRENDER? (room 4)
19. WHERE DID LEE SURRENDER? (room 4)
20. WHAT WAS THE DATE OF THE BATTLE OF BELMONT? (room 3)

(WHEN COMPLETE, TURN IN YOUR ANSWERS TO THE MUSEUM ATTENDANT FOR A TREAT. THANK YOU FOR VISITING COLUMBUS-BELMONT STATE PARK CIVIL WAR MUSEUM)

ANSWER SHEET FOR TEACHERS

1. IN 1861, WHO WERE THE TWO PRESIDENTS OF THE UNITED STATES? (ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND JEFFERSON DAVIS)
2. IN WHAT YEAR DID THE CIVIL WAR BEGIN? (1861)
3. WHERE DID THE CIVIL WAR BEGIN? (FORT SUMTER)
4. WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE RIVER THAT BORDERS COLUMBUS, KY? (MISSISSIPPI RIVER)
5. WHAT WAS THE NAME OF THE CONFEDERATE FORT AT COLUMBUS? (FORT DeRUSSEY)
6. IN WHICH STATE WAS PRESIDENT LINCOLN AND PRESIDENT DAVIS BORN? (KENTUCKY)
7. WHO WAS THE CONFEDERATE MAJOR GENERAL AT COLUMBUS? (LEONIDES POLK)
8. WHO WAS THE UNION BRIGADIER GENERAL AT BELMONT, MO? (ULYSSES S. GRANT)
9. WHO WAS THE 10-YEAR-OLD UNION DRUMMER BOY? (JOHNNY CLEM)
10. WHAT WAS THE NAME OF THE CONFEDERATE CANNON THAT EXPLODED AT COLUMBUS? (THE LADY POLK)
11. WHO WAS THE LADY POLK NAMED AFTER? (LEOINDAS POLK'S WIFE)
12. WHO WAS THE GENERAL OF THE CONFEDERATE ARMY? (ROBERT E. LEE)
13. WHAT COLOR WAS THE CONFEDERATE UNIFORMS? (GRAY)
14. WHAT COLOR WAS THE UNION UNIFORMS? (BLUE)
15. WHICH SIDE OF THE WAR DID MARY TODD LINCOLN'S BROTHER FIGHT? (HE FOUGHT FOR THE SOUTH)
16. HOW MANY DAYS DID THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG LAST? (3 DAYS)
17. WHEN DID GRANT CAPTURE FORT HENRY AND FORT DONELSON? (FEB. 1862)
18. WHEN DID LEE SURRENDER? (APRIL 9, 1865)
19. WHERE DID LEE SURRENDER? (APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE, VA)
20. WHAT WAS THE DATE OF THE BATTLE OF BELMONT? (NOV. 7, 1861)

THANK YOU FOR VISITING COLUMBUS-BELMONT STATE PARK CIVIL WAR MUSEUM

Columbus-Belmont State Park Scavenger Hunt

First – Visit the Museum

1. Who was the Confederate Commander at Columbus?
2. Who was the Union General at Belmont?
3. What is the date of the Battle of Belmont?
4. Who were the two presidents in 1861?
5. What state were they born in?

Second – Stop at the Anchor & Chain

1. What army put the chain across the River?
2. Why did they put the chain across the River?
3. How much does each link weigh?
4. How long was the chain?
5. How long is the anchor?
6. How many links are in the chain now?

Third – Stop at the Cannon

1. How much does it weigh?
2. What size cannon ball does it shoot?
3. How far can it shoot?
4. What is the number on the cannon?
5. What year did they find the cannon?

Fourth – Talk to a Soldier

1. Are you Union or Confederate?
2. Who was the President of the Confederate States?
3. What is a housewife?
4. Where did Lee surrender?
5. What is hard tack?
6. What is a timepiece?

Answers to Scavenger Hunt

MUSEUM:

1. Leonidas Polk
2. Ulysses S. Grant
3. Nov. 7, 1861
4. Jefferson Davis & Abraham Lincoln
5. Kentucky

ANCHOR & CHAIN:

1. The Confederate Army
2. To stop the Union boats from going South
3. 20 lb. & 5 oz.
4. 1 mile long
5. 15 ft. & 9 ½ in. long

CANNON:

1. Approximately 4 tons
2. 32 pounder
3. 1 ½ miles
4. #208
5. 1998

Ask A Soldier:

1. ?
2. Jefferson Davis
3. Sewing Kit
4. Appomattox Court House in VA
5. hard cracker
6. watch





Civil War Days *October 10-12, 2008*

[Columbus-Belmont State Park \(Columbus, KY\)](#)

The weekend will include battle reenactments, living history, and encampments. Friday is **“Education Day”**. Schools, scouts, groups, & clubs are encouraged to schedule field trips. Battles will be held at 2:00 both Sat. and Sun. There will also be a Civil War ball on Saturday evening. Sunday morning services and a Memorial Service at Columbus Cemetery. Sutlers and food vendors will be on site to serve the needs of the reenactors and visiting guests.

Special entertainment daily.

For more information call Park Office (270-677-2327)

or email cindy.lynch@ky.gov



Teachers: Take a Tour Through Time!



On a one-day educational field trip adventure, visit 2 of Kentucky's historic state parks along the Mississippi river where tours can provide a glimpse of the past and discover:

- Civil War history at Columbus-Belmont State Park
- Native American prehistory at Wickliffe Mounds State Historic Site

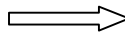
Columbus-Belmont State Park

Located on the Mississippi river, Columbus-Belmont recalls the 1861 Battle of Belmont and the fight to control the waterway. Confederates established a camp here and heavily fortified the area. Union General Grant forced the evacuation of the Confederates in 1862. Today, you can still see the massive chain and anchor used by the South to block passage of the Union gunboats. The farmhouse that served as the Civil War hospital is now a museum.

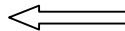


**Don't Miss
Civil War Days
October 10-12**
The weekend includes battle reenactments, living history, and encampments. Friday is Education Day with Reenactors and Interpretive Demonstrations. Special Museum Rate .50 per student (Friday)

Columbus-Belmont
on HWY 123/80/58
Columbus KY



**Only
20 Miles**



Wickliffe Mounds
on HWY 51/60/62
Wickliffe KY

Wickliffe Mounds State Historic Site

Located along the Mississippi river, Wickliffe Mounds is the archaeological site of a prehistoric Native American village of the Mississippian mound-builders. From 1100-1350 A.D., Mississippians built a complex settlement with houses, a ceremonial mound, a central plaza, a chief's mound and a cemetery. The museum displays the excavations from the 1930's, the science of archaeology, artifacts such as pottery and stone tools from the site and social organization of Mississippians.



**Don't Miss
Native American
Education Day
Friday - Nov. 7th**
November is Native American Heritage Month in Kentucky. Celebrate Native American Month at Wickliffe Mounds with cultural demonstrations. Special Rate \$ 1

Tours of the Museums and Parks are One Hour Each

Tours incorporate KY Core Content for Assessment

Picnic Shelter at Columbus-Belmont
Picnic Area at Wickliffe Mounds

School Tour Fees:

Columbus-Belmont Museum \$1.50 adults, \$1.00 students

Wickliffe Mounds Museum and Archaeological Site
\$2.00 students and chaperones, Teachers and Bus Drivers Free

**CONTACT -- To schedule a tour call:
Wickliffe Mounds at 270-335-3681
Columbus-Belmont at 270-677-2327**

www.parks.ky.gov



WORD SCRAMBLE

NAME _____

F	C	D	A	G	R	A	N	T	G	S	B	F	A	V
O	B	G	R	R	D	B	L	U	E	N	O	T	P	A
R	F	C	M	A	O	R	I	V	R	R	C	I	P	E
T	G	I	Y	Y	D	A	V	I	S	B	P	L	O	E
D	1	8	6	5	O	H	C	A	T	P	I	N	M	L
E	Y	6	0	4	G	A	U	N	I	O	N	C	A	E
R	K	4	3	1	P	M	U	S	O	U	T	H	T	T
U	C	C	B	P	W	L	S	P	H	R	F	P	T	R
S	U	A	1	8	6	1	C	1	0	C	T	B	O	E
S	T	1	8	3	5	N	O	K	R	A	B	H	X	B
E	N	L	C	S	A	C	L	G	S	G	L	S	C	O
Y	E	O	I	L	F	O	R	T	S	U	M	T	E	R
D	K	M	C	C	P	L	C	O	L	U	M	B	U	S
1	8	6	2	M	O	N	L	A	D	Y	P	O	L	K

POLK

NORTH

ROBERT E LEE

1861

1862

COLUMBUS

FORT DERUSSEY

1865

GRAY

MISSISSIPPI

APPOMATTOX

CSA

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

VA

BLUE

FORT SUMTER

KENTUCKY

US

GRANT

DAVIS

SOUTH

LADY POLK

RIVER

UNION

ARMY